Sites developed by National Culture Fund

4362. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of heritage sites developed/proposed to be developed by the National Culture Fund in Jharkhand and Bihar;

(b) the quantum of funds provided/proposed for each of these States;

(c) the sites developed/proposed to be developed by ASI through Japanese Trust Fund in these States; and

(d) the funds received so far from JTF?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) and (b) No proposals have yet been received for the development of heritage sites under the aegis of National Culture Fund in Jharkhand and Bihar.

(c) and (d) The Archaeological Survey of India is actively involved as one of the seven executing agencies under Ajanta-Ellora Development Project, in Maharashtra, funded by JBIC (Japan Bank of International Co-operation), earlier known as OECF (Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund). This project was started in the year 1992. The first phase of the project was to be completed by 31.3.2002. The Archaeological Survey of India has utilised an amount of Rs. 86.38 million on development proposals approved by the Steering Committee, headed by the Secretary, Tourism, Government of India. The ASI has received so far, an amount of Rs. 20.11 million as reimbursement claim of 82 per cent out of expenditure of Rs. 24.535 million, admitted by the JBIC and has further submitted balance claims of an expenditure for Rs. 41.847 million. Total reimbursement proposed for this project works out to Rs. 708 million, from the JBIC.

Maintenance of Sun Temple, Konark

4363. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have adopted a strategy for maintenance and conservation of the Sun Temple, Konark;

(b) whether foreign agencies are also extending financial help for the same; and

(c) if so, the details of financial allocation and utilisation of funds during the last three years as well as work undertaken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The Indian Oil Foundation has signed an MoU with the Archaeological Survey of India under the National Culture Fund for funding the conservation and development of this monument complex.

(b) and (c) UNESCO had released US $ 37,000 for the scientific investigations on the Sun Temple, Konark. Out of this sum, the Central Building Research Institute (CBRI) Roorkee conducted studies on soil investigations, stone core sampling, geo-radar studies etc. at a cost of Rs. 10.00 lakhs.

Fashion shows

4364. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state the details of specific reasons for not taking any effective and necessary steps to stop women's fashion shows being organised in the different parts of the country keeping in view the Indian culture?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Reduction of tourism tax

4365. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a research conducted by World Travel and Tourism Council has revealed that tax paid by tourists in India is around 40 per cent which is highest in the World;

(b) if so, whether India can attract more tourists by reducing tax;

(c) whether Government would reduce the tax; and

(d) the other details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) No, Sir. However, in a Status Paper of the World Travel and Tourism Council they have recommended that both Central and State Governments should evolve a taxation regime which yields revenue but is not unduly harsh.